

Social Questions Bulletin



The Methodist Federation for Social Action, an unofficial membership organization, founded in 1907, seeks to deepen within the Church, the sense of social obligation and opportunity to study, from the Christian point of view, social problems and their solutions and to promote social action in the spirit of Jesus. The Federation stands for the complete abolition of war. The Federation rejects the method of the struggle for profit as the economic base for society and seeks to replace it with social-economic planning to develop a society without class or group discriminations and privileges. In seeking these objectives, the Federation does not commit its members to any specific program, but remains an inspirational and educational agency, proposing social changes by democratic decisions, not by violence.

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Program Against Nuclear War

By LINUS PAULING*

Hideous Face of Nuclear War

It is difficult to imagine what a war fought with great nuclear weapons would be like—a war fought with ten thousand times as much explosive energy as during the second World War. It can be estimated that in a third world war as many as one hundred million people would be killed by the blast, fire, and immediate radiation effects of the nuclear bombs, and that perhaps most, of the large cities of the world would be completely destroyed. In addition, the release of radioactive materials would do serious harm to the pool of human germ plasm, in such a way that hundreds of millions of seriously defective children would be born in succeeding generations, and the human race as we know it might cease to exist.

Even the survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, where each of the two atomic bombs killed about 100,000 people, have not escaped attack by the new superbombs, which are one hundred times more powerful than the Hiroshima-Nagasaki bombs. A single one of these superbombs could effectively destroy Moscow, or New York, or London; could kill millions of people. And these bombs are cheap; hundreds of them, probably thousands, have been made, enough to destroy the world. General Lauris Norstad has said, "The U. S. has the power to inflict absolute destruction on Russia." In this post-Sputnik world we have to believe that Russia also has the power to inflict absolute destruction on the U. S.

Who is there in the world who believes that the way to end the differences of opinion between groups of human beings is to use these terrible weapons?

Harmful Effects of Bomb Tests

Tests of nuclear bombs are harmful, because they spread radioactive elements all over the world. A very small amount of an ordinary chemical poison will do no harm whatever to a person; but a very small amount of radiation may harm him in such a way as to cause him to die or to have a seriously defective child.

Rays of high-energy radiation shoot through the body, damaging some molecules, breaking them in two, tearing away some atoms. Some of the new molecules are poisonous. If enough of them are made one will die in a few days of radiation sickness. Many thousands died in this way at the Hiroshima-Nagasaki bombings.

In each cell of the human body there are, among billions of molecules, a few very important ones that govern the behavior of the cell, control the manufacture of other molecules and the process by which the cell divides to form new cells, and determine the nature of the children who are born to the person. If one of these special molecules happens to be damaged by a single little bullet of radiation, from a single radioactive atom, it may be changed to cause the cell to divide much more rapidly than the other cells of the body, produce a colony of rapidly dividing cells. The human being may die from cancer—leukemia,

bone cancer, some other kind of cancer—caused by the single radioactive atom.

The small amounts of radioactive atoms, such as strontium 90 and cesium 137, being spread all over the world by the bomb tests, can cause people to die and defective children to be born. There is no safe amount of radiation or of radioactive material. Even small amounts do harm.

Are Radiation Effects Negligible?

Some people say the number of deaths from leukemia caused by fallout is negligible. The National Academy of Sciences of the United States estimates the 30-year dose of fallout radiation is about one-tenth rad. If we accept this figure, and assume that it is then effective for 30 years in the life of each person, giving 3.0 rad-years, the fallout from weapons testing will cause about 15,000 people living in the world to die of leukemia. Amounts of strontium 90 found in the bones of human beings by Professor T. Laurence Kulp and his colleagues at Columbia University and by other investigators suggest that the true value may well be larger.

Information about bone cancer is less reliable, but it is likely many more cases of bone cancer and of other diseases will be caused by fallout radiation. I calculate testing nuclear weapons will have an effect on health equivalent to causing one million people to die ten years earlier. In addition, there is the effect on the pool of human germ plasm. From the estimates reported by the National Academy of Sciences, the probable effect of bomb testing at the present rate would be to increase by 5000 the number of seriously defective children born each year. Are these effects negligible? They represent only a small fractional increase in the deaths of leukemia, bone cancer, and other diseases, and in the infants born with serious mental and physical deficiencies.

I believe each human being is important. A few thousand or a few million human beings, a small fraction of all those now living in the world, are important. Dr. Albert Schweitzer has said that "A humanitarian is a man who believes that no human being should be sacrificed to a project." I believe no human being should be sacrificed to the project of perfecting nuclear weapons to kill hundreds of millions of people. The leader of a nation testing nuclear weapons should know that when he gives the order to explode a superbomb with five megatons equivalent of fission he is probably dooming 1500 people to die of leukemia, tens of thousands more to die of bone cancer and other diseases, and 100,000 seriously defective children to be born in future generations.

On This Scientists Do Not Disagree

All geneticists agree background radiation causes harmful mutations, genetic damage to the human race. Let me quote the report of the National Academy of Sciences on "The Biological Effects of Atomic Radiation," 1956, conclusions reached by the leading geneticists in the United States:

"Any radiation is genetically undesirable, since any radiation induces harmful mutations. Further, all scientific information leads to the conclusion the genetic harm is proportional to the total dose."

"Roughly 4 to 5 per cent of all live births in the United States

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have defects of this sort (mental defect, epilepsy, congenital malformations, neuromuscular defects, hematological and endocrine defects, defects in vision or hearing, cutaneous and skeletal defects, or defects in the gastro-intestinal or genito-urinary tracts), and perhaps half or 2 per cent of the total live births, have simple genetic origin. If mankind were subjected to a 'doubling dose' of radiation, then the present 2 per cent of such genetic defects would rise, and eventually be doubled." "A dose of 10 roentgen would on the above basis, give rise to some 50,000 new instances of tangible inherited defects in the first generation, and about 500,000 per generation ultimately." "The basic fact is—and no competent person doubts this—radiations produce mutations, and mutations are in general harmful." "We ought to keep radiation as low as possible . . . From the point of view of genetics, it is all bad." "As geneticists we say: Keep the dose as low as you can."

The average of the rather closely agreeing estimates made by the leading U. S. geneticists is that about 10 per cent of seriously defective children are defective because of mutations caused by background radiation. Each year about 75 million children are born in the world. About one and a half million of these are seriously defective because of bad genes. Ten per cent are caused by background radiation.

If you think I am exaggerating, and some scientists contend no damage is done, you could easily have been misled by statements published in newspapers, in particular statements made by some scientists, some representatives of the Atomic Energy Commission.

Atomic Energy Commission Misleads

There is widespread belief among scientists that the Atomic Energy Commission has not been honest with the public in its pronouncements about the biological effects of fallout radioactivity. Scientists think the public statements by spokesmen for the Commission, such as Dr. Libby, do not correctly express the beliefs of the biologists employed by the Commission itself.

Many public statements of the Commission are seriously misleading. For example, according to the *New York Herald Tribune* of June 9, 1957, Dr. Libby the day before said "There is no single provable case of any person being injured or seriously affected by any of the slightly extra radiation created in the United States by the tests." This is seriously misleading because it suggests fallout radiation does no harm. When a man dies from leukemia or bone cancer, there is no way of telling whether his disease was caused by fallout radiation or by cosmic rays or heredity or some other natural cause. Hence no one person can be pointed out as having died from leukemia or bone cancer caused by fallout—there is no provable case, as Dr. Libby says. Even statistical methods fail, because medical statistics are not good enough to detect a small increase, of one or two per cent in the number of deaths by leukemia (about 150,000 per year). But it is not right to state there is no single provable case, and then say no more.

Another misleading statement by AEC spokesmen is that "the amount of fallout radioactivity is much smaller than the maximum permissible amount." This statement is misleading because people in general think the "maximum permissible amount" is the amount that causes no damage. It is an amount set by health authorities such that the risk of serious health damage is not so great as to make it necessary to forbid workers to be subjected to it. It is a limit of danger set for a hazardous occupation, an occupation that may be selected by a few individual workers, by their own decision; but it is an entirely unsuitable limit for the whole of the people in the world, with no choice of their own. The present "maximum permissible amount" of radiation for workers in hazardous industry is 200 rad (200 radiation units) in a lifetime, 5 rad per year. Many biologists, such as Dr. W. L. Russell of the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, have estimated the amount of shortening of life expectancy that radiation produces. There is rather general agreement that decrease in life expectancy is approximately two weeks per rad. The "maximum permissible amount" now allowed, would, on the average shorten a man's life by about eight years. The effect of radiation is a random one—some people are caused to die, others are not. If fallout radioactivity is as great as one two-thousandths of the "maximum permissible amount" (it probably is considerably higher) about one person in 2000 in the world would have his life cut short by about eight years. Over one million people now living may be expected to have serious damage done to their health by the bomb tests. Statements made

that the amount of fallout radioactivity is much smaller than the maximum permissible amount are mis-leading—used to lull us into inactivity, to keep the facts from us, to prevent us from doing our duty as citizens, helping to make the proper decision with knowledge of the facts.

Scientists, who have a background of knowledge and experience that permits them to know the facts, and who make misleading statements, which seem to be intentionally misleading, are really guilty of seriously improper behavior.

Radiation does damage the human race. It causes genetic damage, and it causes somatic damage. The genetic damage means suffering for our children, our children's children. Is it right for us to sacrifice the health and well-being of future generations, our children, because we are unwilling to make the effort to find solutions of international problems that trouble this generation by peaceful means?

Immoral Arguments for Tests

Professor K. S. Pitzer and Dr. Willard F. Libby, of the Atomic Energy Commission, have said the number of deaths due to the nuclear bomb tests is small compared with the number, 40,000 per year, due to automobile accidents.

We who strive to cut down the number of people killed each year in automobile accidents, should strive also to cut down the number killed by bomb tests—which we can do by stopping the tests. The suggestion that it would be all right to carry on bomb tests so long as the number of Americans killed by bomb tests is less than the number killed by automobiles, 40,000 per year, is highly immoral. Dr. Libby also compared the chance that a person takes of dying from leukemia or bone cancer or other disease caused by fallout radioactivity from the bomb tests with the chance he takes of drowning if he goes swimming in the ocean. I am shocked.

We believe in freedom of the individual to decide for himself to take the chance of drowning if he wants to go swimming. It is entirely different for a few national leaders in Washington, Moscow, and London to decide to subject everyone of the two and one-half billion people in the world to radioactive poison that can cause leukemia, bone cancer, and other diseases, and that will cause many thousands of them to die.

Our Dirty "Clean" Bombs

There is no such thing as a clean bomb. Bombs can be made in various ways, some with great fission, producing great amounts of radioactive fission products, and others with great fusion producing a smaller yield of radioactive materials. But to call any bomb that can kill millions of human beings a clean bomb is to insult a noble word in the English language. Every nuclear weapon is dirty, filthy, evil. This is a misuse of science, the application of the greatest of all discoveries in working toward the destruction of the world, the destruction of humanity rather than in working for man's welfare.

Stepping Up the Arms Race Is No Answer

The attitude of our government, in part in response to the Russian satellite, may be represented by the statement of Secretary of Commerce Weeks on November 13, 1957:

"The Soviet Union's sensational exploits in satellites have posed the most serious challenge of this tension-wracked age. American business must move up into the front line of defense. We must support a budget adequate for national security. The emphasis now is on less butter and more guns."

Are we never going to grow out of the state of savagery? Are we never going to be able to do justice to our name as homo sapiens—to be able to think clearly enough to solve our problems in a peaceful way?

The American bomb tests, the Russian bomb tests, and the British bomb tests are essentially equally harmful, and national leaders in Washington, Moscow, and London who decide to carry out these bomb tests, rather than halt them through effective international agreement, are equally guilty of reprehensible action.

The fact that even the bomb tests themselves do harm to human beings and to the human race can serve as a warning of the disaster to the world that would be caused by a general nuclear war. All scientists with a real background of experience in the pertinent fields agree that radiation causes biological damage.

ed: A New Peace-Serving Diplomacy

think that the time has now come for man's reason to win for war to be abolished. A great nuclear war would be a trophe to the world, to all humanity. Surely if a nuclear war is to be averted it is necessary that some way be found for the great nations of the world to settle their international problems other than by the threat of mutual destruction. I do not believe that our great national leaders will permit a nuclear war to take place, a war that would kill hundreds of millions of people all over the world. And if there is not going to be a nuclear war, then why are the great nations of the world spending a large fraction of their national income in preparing for it? This action does not make sense. We can understand the present behavior of nations only when we recognize that diplomacy, the conduct of world affairs, has lagged far behind science and technology in its development.

The time has now come for diplomacy to move out of the nineteenth century, into the real world of the twentieth century, a world in which war and threat of war no longer have a right to place as the instrument of national policy. We must move toward a world governed by justice, by international law, and not by force.

We may well ask—what are the steps that need to be taken? I may make some suggestions, but I would not contend that I have all of the right answers. First, we must all, including the diplomats and national leaders, change our point of view. We must recognize that extreme nationalism is a thing of the past. The idea that it is just as important to do harm to other nations as to do good to your own nation must be given up. We must begin to work for the world as a whole, for humanity. Science is search for the truth—it is not a game in which one tries to beat his opponent, to do harm to others. We need to have the spirit of science in international affairs, to make the conduct of international affairs the effort to find the right solution—the just solution of international problems, not the effort to teach each nation to get the better of other nations, to do them harm when it is possible.

Policy and Action Program for Peace

Perhaps diplomats and politicians can take a lesson from scientists about how to learn to do a better job. During three of the last summer I attended international scientific congresses and symposia in Europe. I learned a great deal, and I am sure that the scientists learned a great deal. I propose there be held international symposia for politicians and diplomats, where they could get acquainted with one another, talk about their problems, but not vote. Voting is necessary sometimes to settle political problems, but it is not the way to discover the truth. The world problem is a problem that affects everybody—radioactive fallout reaches the whole world. Every nation in the world should belong to the United Nations, and do its part in solving world problems.

If world problems are to be settled without recourse to war, as they now must be, the methods of international law must be strengthened. We now have an international organization, the United Nations. It must become more powerful. I think the Assembly of the United Nations should be assigned the conducting duty of arbitrating all international disputes in a just and effective manner. A set of principles regulating the actions of the United Nations as arbitrator will have to be formulated. At the present time the Assembly of the United Nations consists of representatives who vote in accordance with the policies of their respective nations rather than in accordance with their individual beliefs and judgments. A way should be found to incorporate within the structure of the United Nations a group of representatives of the people of the world who would strive to solve world problems rather than to strengthen the position of one nation or group of nations at the expense of others.

Scientists know that it is not easy to find solutions to scientific problems. Often years go by before a solution of a problem is found; sometimes the solution is a brilliant one, that solves the problem in an unexpected and surprising way. I think the world is not now trying hard enough to find solutions to the world problems. I propose there be set up a great international research institute, in which thousands of scientists, eco-

nomists, geographers, and other experts could work year after year in analysis of world problems and search for new, effective ways of solving them without war, but by use of international law, with justice done to all nations and to all human beings. This research program deserves to be carried out on a great scale. A part of the defense budgets of the nations could be allocated to this attack on world problems. With a budget of say, five billion dollars per year, to be used to support thousands of scientists and scholars in working on the problems of the modern world, great progress could be made.

Start By Stopping the Bomb Tests

Let us start by stopping the bomb tests. Thousands of scientists have signed this appeal:

(Editor's Note: Over 9,000 joined Dr. Pauling in submitting this to the United Nations earlier this year.)

"We the scientists whose names are signed below, urge that an international agreement to stop the testing of nuclear bombs be made now.

"Each nuclear bomb test spreads and added burden of radioactive elements over every part of the world. Each added amount of radiation causes damage to the health of human beings all over the world and causes damage to the pool of human germ plasma such as to lead to an increase in the number of seriously defective children that will be born in future generations. So long as these weapons are in the hands of only three powers, an agreement for their control is feasible. If testing continues, and the possession of these weapons spreads to additional governments, the danger of outbreak of a cataclysmic nuclear war through the reckless action of some irresponsible national leader will be greatly increased. An international agreement to stop the testing of nuclear bombs now could serve as a first step toward a more general disarmament and the ultimate effective abolition of nuclear weapons, averting the possibility of a nuclear war that would be a catastrophe to all humanity.

"We have in common with our fellow men a deep concern for the welfare of all human beings. As scientists we have knowledge of the dangers involved and therefore a special responsibility to make those dangers known. We deem it imperative that immediate action be taken to effect an international agreement to stop the testing of all nuclear weapons."

Needed Elevation of Morality

I find it hard to believe I live in a world, the world of 1958, in which there is general acceptance of war as a method of solving international problems. How can we believe that it is right to use force, to kill millions of human beings, because of disputes between nations? War is immoral. I believe in morality, justice, humanitarianism. We must recognize power to destroy the world by the use of nuclear weapons as a power that cannot be used—we cannot accept the idea of such monstrous immorality. The time has now come for morality to take its proper place of prime importance in the conduct of world affairs; the time has now come for the nations of the world to submit to the just regulation of their conduct by international law.

Dear Mark: Now into my 90's I find myself unable to carry on in anything beyond my personal demands. Memories of my life in the Federation are charged with great happiness. God bless you in keeping the light of those days shining!

WM. CAMPBELL WASSER, Denver, Colorado.

Dear Mr. McMichael: Congratulations on the excellent January issue of *Social Questions Bulletin*. I have a hobby of tape recording any material I believe will further the cause of peace. I found very little in the January issue which could not be placed in this category. EDWARD D. GOURLEY, Aptos, Calif.

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"ATOMS FOR WAR LEGISLATION"

(A Message from the Methodist Board of World Peace)

Churches solidly endorse sharing with other nations our knowledge concerning atomic energy and fissionable material (for peaceful uses). They look with alarm upon the President's proposal Congress give him authority to transfer to other nations: (1) blueprints of nuclear weapons, (2) plutonium and U 235 to make weapons, (3) "trigger" and non-nuclear components of A and H bombs, (4) a delivery system of submarines, and cannon. Bills providing this authority are Senate 3474 and House 11426.

A year ago (May 18, 1957) in Boston, the Assistant Secretary of State, Francis Wilcox, asserted, "If a fourth country, and a fifth, and half a dozen others obtain such weapons, the control problem would become infinitely more complicated." Two months later (July 22) Mr. Dulles himself observed, "As matters are going the time will come when the pettiest dictator, the most irresponsible dictator could get weapons with which to threaten immense harm."

Chairman of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, holding hearings on this issue, is Rep. Carl Albert and Vice Chairman is Senator Clinton Anderson. (This Bulletin suggests you, your MFSA chapter and church group, write these men today and your own congressman and senators.)

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MFSA National Membership meeting, Methodist Conference Ground, White Sulphur Springs, St. Helena, Calif., Sept. 1-3. Send your registration and ideas now to MFSA, Box 327, Gresham, Oregon.

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Any society which pins its hope of survival upon technical ability to massacre scores of millions of the enemy's innocent noncombatants, which is at the same time reckless of its responsibility for poisoning, in the name of self-defense, the atmosphere and food-bearing soil of the whole earth, has accepted moral degradation which denies it any title to freedom within itself. Brutalization of foreign policy must brutalize and poison internal life. That position undermines its highest protestations on the world stage and (as did the slaughters of Hiroshima and Nagasaki) all its most deeply held beliefs.

WALTER MILLIS, N.Y. Times Magazine, Feb. 2, 1958.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES

For years our President and Secretary of State have met Soviet pronouncements concerning peaceful coexistence and disarmament with demand for deeds not words. Now they are faced with a deed. The Supreme Soviet ordered cessation of all bomb tests, and instructed the Council of Ministers to implement the order. It appealed to other nations possessing nuclear weapons to do likewise. If they decide to continue testing the Soviet Union will "naturally act on the question of future tests in accordance with interests of its own security."

Here is the opportunity to meet deed with deed and go on from there. At this date our answer is NO.

The President said: "I think it is just a side issue, I think it is a gimmick, and I don't think it is to be taken seriously." The dictionary definitions of gimmick add up to trickery. The word originally described swindling devices in gambling machines. Dulles seconded the President by calling the Soviet announcement "a meaningless trick, effective propaganda, nothing more."

The moral worth of these insults was made clear when Dulles revealed there had been top discussion on the wisdom of "trying to steal a march on the Soviets" by announcing suspension of tests before Moscow did. The President said: "We decided it was not good for the United States at this time." Dulles was more frank. He said the idea was rejected because we felt our "duties to the American people and humanity" require continued tests to develop "clean" tactical bombs. This is a kind of cleanliness which has no relation to godliness.

Our first use of half truths was treating the Soviet offer as only suspension of tests. In presenting it, Gromyko told the Supreme Soviet it was part of a plan to reach step by step agreement with other powers for unconditional ban on all nu-

clear weapons, an end to their production, and complete destruction of existing stocks, "under proper controls."

Each of our charges concerning Soviet previous behavior on this issue omits part of the truth. We pressed heavily their boycotting the U.N. disarmament discussions. They said until there was more equality for the socialist governments the Commission. The President wrote, they made no reply to his proposals for inspection from the sky and control of outer space. They agreed to parts of each and offered additions. Dulles charged them with refusing our proposals for inspection at a London conference last summer. One of our scientists points out they accepted our original plan which Stassen presented. Then we switched to another one requiring full scale inspection of Russian classified areas where bombs could be produced—then putting the last step before the first, he said.

The most dangerous half-truth in the administration's rejection of the Soviet proposal is assertion that its action was only propaganda. The more experienced reporters see the truth that the propaganda value of the Soviet action is in the deed, not the words. The corollary truth about the ineffectiveness of propaganda was long ago expressed in a proverb: "What you are doing speaks so loud I cannot hear what you say."

The world response to the Soviet announcement is because it could be the first step toward what the greater part of mankind wants—release from the fear of nuclear warfare. The worldwide reaction to Mr. Dulles' policy is because it leads in the opposite direction. With his evil nonsense about "clean tactical bombs" and "limited wars" in the next decade, or perhaps 25 years, and the distribution of nuclear weapons, he is moving again to a brink from which the turning back is out of his control and that of his fellow policy makers.

Can the policy be changed before it is too late? There is opposition in the Pentagon, State Department, and other administration circles. The President appointed a commission to seek agreement. If it cannot he will have to decide. If scientists tell him they are satisfied with the results of the coming tests he says he might favor unilateral suspension by us. The government scientists made it clear they are interested only in better weapons and anti-weapons. Teller, "father of the H-bomb," says "disarmament is a lost cause."

Also the President hopes Russia will accept his new proposal to get technical experts together to work out measures for overseeing a disarmament program. This is the card before the horse. It means more delay. Meantime, a bill is before Congress for the most deadly rearmament of all that we have effected since World War II.

It seeks to amend the Atomic Energy Act by making possible transfer to our allies of weapon blue prints; special nuclear materials for military purposes; non-nuclear components of nuclear weapons; weapon delivery systems. The power over this is given to the President. And our allies include China, Rhee, Franco, West Germany with its ex-Nazi generals. This is the keystone of the clean weapons, limited wars policy. Against this the deluge of radioactivity destruction.

There is a man who would like to know what we are going to do about it. He is President-General of the Methodist Church of Australia. In a recent sermon he declared Dulles was "leading the world to atomic death" by a policy "totally out of keeping with Christian principles." He called upon the Christian Church to "do its utmost" to stop "America's suicidal policy in refusing negotiations with the Soviet Union."

In Minnesota more than 200 pastors of 14 denominations have written a personal letter to the President calling for cancelling the Pacific tests as "biologically destructive and morally indefensible." This protest was suggested by the committee for world peace of the Minnesota Council of Churches.

Who will start a similar protest to Congressmen and Senators concerning the distribution of nuclear weapons bill?

H.F.W.

BULLETIN VOLUME 37 ISSUES REQUESTED

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